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and worthy to be associated (as in my judgment they are in this passage) with the ceaseless flow of mighty rivers into the sea, and the slow and silent movement of the stars.

Virgil was one of the most picturesque of poets, perhaps the most picturesque of the classical poets—the one who looked most upon Nature with the eye a landscape-painter. I cannot doubt that he was as familiar with all the phases of the Apennines as our own Cole was with those of his Catskills, at whose feet he dwelt, and from which his genius drew daily inspiration. Neither the poet-artist nor the painter would, in portraying the grander aspects of nature, have thought of substituting the shades cast either by trees or by forests in their mass, which can be measured by feet or yards, with those gigantic shadows thrown in broad day one way or the other from every jutting mount, or boldly projecting rock; and which, in early morning or before sunset, are thrown by the mountain mass itself, and cover alternately their whole eastern and western slopes.

Though the commentators and translators are against me, I am not solitary in my opinion. I have stated my question to two of the best authorities to be found anywhere—one a great poet, the other an excellent painter, both of them good Latinists as well as close observers of that nature they have, in different ways admirably described, and both pronounce my interpretation to be the only true one.

Should this meet the eye of my friend Weir, who looks hourly from his mountain home at West Point on the changing shadows of the Highlands of the Hudson, he will add his authority; and so, indeed, as it seems to me, must every one familiar with mountain scenery, whatever learned commentators or city-bred poets may say to the contrary.

But I submit the question to the judgment of your readers, whether scholars or artists, or, what I am glad to say, is no uncommon union in this country, to those entitled to judge in both capacities.

Yours,

V.

Editor of the Crayon—

CAN any of your correspondents or readers inform me when and whence the word *Vendue* came into our language. It is, I believe, originally American, for it is not to be found in any English Dictionary until those published within a few years. It is not in Bailey, Johnson, Walker, Richardson, or any other before Webster. I had supposed it to be either of old legal use from the Norman-French, or else provincial. With the first view I consulted Jacob's Law Dictionary, but in vain, and was equally unsuccessful in Halliwell's Provincial English Dictionary. I believe that it is not used by any native English writer, but it has the high authority of our Franklin. It has long been in use in this country, but is now, I think, more generally used in the country than in cities. Farmers in the State of New York all speak of Vendues and Vendue-masters, which in the city are ordinarily changed to *auction* and *auctioneer*, though *Vendue* keeps its place on the red flags used at furniture sales.

The word is a good one, and we have authority in plenty for its use in our laws and best writers, but what I am curious to know is the history and pedigree of the word—whether it is not of Scotch or of Dutch origin, and whether it is intelligible to an Englishman?

QUERY.

Architecture.

"OUR BUILDING STONES."

AFTER having found that when the sandstone and marble are associated together in the Trinity church-yard, the latter only is much decayed; after having pointed out numerous instances where sandstone buildings are fast crumbling to ruin; after reasoning that while all stones are alike ruined by fire, none can have a useful advantage, and demonstrating that, from its natural composition it must necessarily be frail and temporary, my friend C. is again found in the March number of *THE CRAYON* replying to me, eight columns long, and still insisting upon the superiority of that temporary paste, called by a kind of derisive justice, *sand-stone*. Next to the man who would build his house upon the sand, I know of none more unwise than he. To rescue freestone from the contempt into which it is fast falling might seem a useful task, but the attempt to advance its claims above those old stone heroes, granite and marble, seems to me preposterous; and so I shall not hereafter write anything more upon the subject, believing that the public have already made up their verdict upon the matter, while as to C. and myself it is of no great consequence what we may say or believe.

I cannot, however, refrain from some comments upon C.'s last paper. He reluctantly admits there "*was*" a crack in the front of the Trinity Church edifice, and calls my statement, that there is one "injurious." I do not see how this state of the case can redound to the credit of either the church or its sandstone material—C. seems very sensitive about that old puttied-up seam.

Having marched down, at C.'s request, to St. Peter's Church, and acknowledging the significance of his discoveries in its foundations, I would now like to march him up to that very Historical Society building which he so lauds, and there, over a large window, on the north side, he will find a large piece of Nova Scotia sandstone, disgracefully broken, apparently by its own weight. It may be by this time mended, and this "damaging" mention of the "was cracked," impertinent and out of place.

So it seems they put India-rubber coats on the granite columns in Paris, to keep them from the weather. Where on earth could C. have got this story from? I have seen and leaned against the obelisk of Luxor many hundreds of times, but never discovered this costume.

C. is a curious reasoner. To disprove my statement about the composition of sandstone, he quotes the analysis of two distinguished authorities, one of whom, my old friend and teacher, Prof. Cleaveland, says it is "united by a cement, calcareous, marly, argillaceous, or even silicious"—while the other, Prof. Hays, says it is cemented by a "silicate of proto-peroxide of iron," which latter is, to be sure, not very far from what I have maintained. Is not this process of proving me wrong, rather "*Hibernicè*?"

R.

WE find in the *Builder*, for October, a report of the opening address of the President of the Liverpool Architectural Society, which contains so much good sense that we are constrained to make a few extracts, believing that the remarks are quite as applicable in New York as in any other city :

"Generally speaking, the ugliest thing about us is a common street dwelling-house, with its five or six holes in the wall, lintelled by a shapeless patch of stone. Cast your eye upon any other object around you, not at the works of God, but at the other works of man; look at a ship, a coach, a steam engine, at most musical instruments, a harp, a guitar—look at these, and then look at what is very properly called a common dwelling-house, and say, is not anything, everything you see, more beautiful, or rather less ugly, than that? I believe at no other period of the world could this have been said, which appears the more strange when we consider that it is one in which the importance of the individual in society is so fully acknowledged; and I never hear of the happy homes of England but I feel a regret that the great bulk of them should be so void of those graces which might make them happier, and have a refining and ennobling influence upon the mind, besides strengthening that love of home, which some degree of beauty in domestic architecture would not fail to foster.

"What makes the matter worse is the ugliness complained of being from one mould. A variety of ugly things would often be a relief to the eye.

"I was wondering the other day, while walking through one of our ordinary streets of brick-built houses, whether in any other age, whether at any time, even in China, could be found so many doors and windows exactly alike. 'Heads and sills to the windows,' said the first specification which we copied in our pupillage, 'heads and sills,' still echoes the one we drew up yesterday, and heads and sills are supplied by the mason from the same unvarying mould. Five or six windows thus adorned, along with a circular-headed opening, filled in with a bit of entablature, and a couple of wooden columns for a door, compose the fronts of tens of thousands of our street houses; and thus we go on. Builders of small houses, it is true, have at length got hold of a second idea for a window; but it is a false one. Bay windows are very good things in their place. A bay window projecting from the front or side of a house may give you a prospect from a room which you could not otherwise have; but a long row of bay windows looking right into each other, obstructing one another's view, and destroying the privacy of the rooms they belong to, is an absurdity that one would hardly expect to see carried to such an extent as it has lately been in Liverpool.

"Besides, bay windows and pigmy porticoes, and porches, or any other projections from the fronts of small houses, marking too strongly by the extent of each front, only produce littleness and make small houses look smaller than they are, which, Heaven knows, is needless. We have, I think, a better resource than this from the monotony complained of in the shape of colored and moulded bricks, to which, I think, we must look for infusing beauty and variety into our small houses. Where expense is not feared, there is nothing like stone for window and door dressings; but where ideas of economy exclude stone, bricks will be found a useful and artistic means of relief and embellishment in the hands of an architect of

taste. Neither durability nor beauty need be confined to palaces and large mansions. Small houses need not be either mean or fragile. Architectural beauty was not sought in palaces or great mansions only during the great periods of Art.

"But I have not quite done with my strictures on street architecture. Where, in a better class of houses than those I have referred to, something like architecture is exhibited, it is still all shallow front show, and this is, perhaps, the greatest eyesore of all; the pretensions of houses to be more than they really are. It is as insanely ridiculous as it would be for a man to wear an embroidered waistcoat or front garment, while out at elbows or in hanging rags behind, for the back and sides are often as much seen as the front. But such absurdity is only exhibited in houses, and thousands who would scorn pretence in everything else, who dress well and thoroughly, and have real substantial dinners every day served up on solid mahogany, live in houses in which the architecture is all superficial—a mere wash of decoration in front, while all the rest is deformity itself.

"A prime cause of ill taste, or of carelessness on the subject of domestic architecture is, I believe, a diminution of the ancient love of home. Men have now less reverence for the houses of their forefathers, and less wish to rear dwellings on which their descendants shall look with pleasure. Our houses are built to serve the present generation only, and, of course, we are proportionally indifferent as to their beauty. To whatever this be owing—whether to the spirit of enterprise among the masses, which creates such sudden and great changes in the circumstances of men, or to other causes, it is not natural to the human mind. It is in human nature to reverence antiquity, which gives great increase of dignity to a building.

"On the subject of town improvements I have hitherto confined myself to those qualities which are demanded by the eye and the sense of beauty; but we have other organs and senses which ought to be satisfied, and which happily delight in those qualities which are essential to the comfort and health of the body. It is really astonishing, now that the laws of the atmosphere have become known to us, that some of the very simple means which have been devised for, at least, the discharge of foul air from apartments, have not become universal in our houses and public buildings. I am no advocate for the monstrous and unnatural appliances under which some public buildings groan, and which might give the visitor to their lower regions the idea that to be warmed and ventilated was the sole object of their erection. But I think that some means for the exit of foul air should as invariably follow lighting by gas as a shadow its substance; and that the application of a simple mode of ventilation to buildings ought to be made compulsory on owners of houses. Though in almost every house gas is burnt for several hours every day for the greater part of the year, strange to say, not one in ten has any escape for the foul air.

"Means of health and comfort should take precedence of decoration. Baths and water-closets should be provided in houses before marble chimney-pieces, or plaster cornices, or even panelled doors. While a house is without a proper supply of pure water, efficient sewerage, and the means of discharging the poisonous products of combustion and respiration, its architectural character is of little consequence. While inhaling the miasma of the neighboring church-yard, the effluvia of open cesspools, slaughter-houses, and so forth, in their midst,

the architectural beauty of public buildings and streets is an insult to the people, who would be more benefited by, and I trust, more grateful for, the smallest purification of the atmosphere they breathe than by the creation of a Roman magnificence around them."

MR. RUSKIN, at a *conversazione* of the Architectural Association, read lately a paper on "The Use of the Imagination in modern Architectural Design," a report of which we find in the *Builder*. The paper was written for the benefit of young architects. "Mr. Ruskin commenced by observing that what he had written seemed to have taken too much the form of advice . . . but he must shelter himself behind the plea, that a man might be qualified to give his advice to others merely by having made mistakes himself." Mr. Ruskin states that "the qualities which distinguish great artists from mean artists were—first, the imagination; second, their industry;" and thus continues:

"During such investigation as he had been able to give to the lives of the great artists who had influenced the world by their career, no fact ever loomed so much upon him, and no law was so universal in its application as this,—that they were all great workers. One of the unailing characteristics of great artists was the astonishing quantity of work they accomplished during their lives. . . . But though this quality of industry was essential to an artist, it did not make an artist; for many people were always busy whose doings are of little worth. Neither did feeling make the artist; but the gift which distinctively made the artist—without which he would be feeble in life and forgotten in death, was that of imagination."

For our part, we find it difficult to conceive how feeling can be made visible except through imagination; its effect being in proportion to the greater or less power and richness of the imagination; or, stating the difficulty otherwise, wherever feeling is manifest, it seems to us there must be *some* imagination. After saying that "imagination was not manipulation, or calculation, or attention, and illustrating these qualities in this wise:

"If an architect lays his bricks and stones well, we praise him for his manipulation; if he keeps well within his contract, we praise him for his calculation; if he arranges his beams so that nobody drops through his floors, we praise him for his caution."

He continues:

"If he is to be a great architect, he must do something more than possess and exercise these qualities, . . . he must be telling *fairy tales out of his head*."

Now this, the "fairy tale" character of imagination, seems to us a clue to Mr. Ruskin's views of the standard of imagination. We gather this positively from his defence of Turner's unintelligible characteristics, and negatively by his critique on Walter Scott, and generally by a sort of intense affection for the truly beautiful Art-expression of mediæval mind and heart without considering that expression relatively to the art of previous ages, or the natural development of Art in the future. Whatever the value of

our comment may be, we quite agree with Mr. Ruskin, that "*imagination should exhibit faculties of sympathy with living creatures, and all the varied beauties of nature around us*." In the course of his lecture in further illustration of his views of imagination, Mr. Ruskin exhibited photographs of sculpture over the doors of the two cathedrals of Amiens and Notre Dame, and in contrast to these in order to "contrast the works of our great forefathers with the commonplace and dull productions of the present day," he exhibited "the drawing of a hole-in-the-wall building on the lines and proportion system, which did not require the aid of imagination in its design, and which any one might find in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, from which the drawing was copied according to scale," of a kind of architecture abounding in this city, on the Fifth Avenue, for instance, where most of the structures seem to be the result of the energy of a *builder*, instead of the taste and feeling of an artist-architect. But we must pass on to his remarks upon the relation of sculpture to architecture: he regretted

"in modern times the separation between sculpture and architecture; the former, indeed, being that in which the imagination of architects should be shadowed forth. In order to give their imagination and the other powers of their soul full scope, architects must themselves be sculptors; they must not study building without sculpture, and must themselves use the chisel. In fact, the lecturer went on to show that sculpture alone was architecture! Nicolo Pisano sculptured his panels and mouldings with his own hand; but our modern architects ordered bishops at so much a mitre, and cripples at so much a crutch. The great painters of old did not disdain to paint small pictures as well as frescoes of the colossal gallery, and why then should the modern architect disdain to fill up the spaces of his great building by sculptures of his own, instead of trusting such a work to others, who had not, perhaps, the same imagination as himself."

We should like to print the entire report of the lecture, but our space restricts us to a few paragraphs.

"What a field was opened to the fancy by the junction of sculpture with architecture! Nearly every other Art was limited in its space; but was there anything within the range of sight, or thought, or conception, which might not be of use to the architect, or in which our interest might not be awakened to the advantage of his Art? The whole animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdom bent down before, and was at the disposal of the architect; and as there was nothing in life, so, there was nothing in lifelessness which had not its lesson for him and its gift, now that these were submitted to them, not to be dissected and analyzed, but to be sympathized with, in order to bring out what might be called the moral part of their imagination."

"Let the artist talk well in his works, and he would be remembered long after he was gone; let him build large enough, and carve boldly enough, and all the world would hear him. Let him see that his work was happily done, or it never would make any one else happy; let him be influenced but by one noble impulse, and let that impulse be love—love for the Art he practises, and for the creatures to whom he ministers it."

When it came to these questions with a young architect—

"Did their Art lead them? or did their desire for gain lead them? They might like making money exceedingly, but if it came to a fair question of whether they were to make £500 less upon a business, or to spoil their building, and they chose to spoil their building, it was all over with their Art. They must love Art for its own sake, and if they allowed the desire for money, for fame, or for position, to take precedence over the love of their Art, they were not, in the true sense, artists—they were mechanics and drudges."

"In the next place, they must love the creation they work in the midst of, for wholly in proportion to the intensity of feeling with which they approached to the subject they had chosen, would be the depth and justice of their perception of its character: *that perception was not to be gained at the moment they wished to bring it to bear, but must be the fruit of an intimate feeling of love and sympathy.*"

Mr. Ruskin's own preference for architecture among the sister Arts, leads him to make certain assertions which, if true, are somewhat like the brusqueries of a well-meaning, but ill-bred man in polite society; for instance, he says that, as architecture "embraced a wider field than all others, so it was more profound and holy than all others." We are not disposed to question this point at present, but we cannot consent to placing the architect upon a virtuous pedestal at the expense of his artist brethren, according to the following dictum, that—

"The artist (meaning the painter, sculptor, etc.), when his pupil is perfect, must see him leave his room that he may pursue his destiny, perhaps, as an *opponent* in toil; the man of science *wrestles* with the man of science, but *architects alone were called by kindness to fraternity of toil!*"

This short lecture is an epitome of Mr. Ruskin's faults and excellences, the latter of which, as usual, predominate. Critics may say what they will about this man, but he is the best writer on Art for the public generally that the world ever saw. Independent of the positive knowledge which he has developed by study and research, and regardless of his eloquence, which (a popular idol-quality) is rarely more than rhetorical deception, Mr. Ruskin is entitled to the honest endorsement of every lover of truth and Art of his time. He has for this age exposed conventionalities, shams, and false worship more ably and skillfully than his contemporaries, and he is, therefore, a reformer in the best sense of the word. It is not to be wondered at that he, in his turn becomes an idol to sectarian disciples. It would be a wonder if he did not. The world is not yet advanced far enough to estimate truth apart from the personalities with which it is connected.

No error is more common, than to mistake the evidences of fashion for those of taste,—unless it be to overlook the close connection that exists between fashion and vulgarity. No man can possess taste without either a superior intellect or superior education; but the veriest blockhead can appreciate the value of fashion, and adapt himself to its acquisitions.—*N. A. Review.*

BEAUTY.—I have come to the conclusion, if man, or woman either, wishes to realize the full power of personal beauty, it must be by cherishing noble hopes and purposes—by having something to do, and something to live for, which is worthy of humanity—and which, by expanding the soul, gives expansion and symmetry to the body which contains it.—*Professor Upham.*

Landscape-Gardening.

THE last issue of *The North American Review* contains an article bearing the title of "Landscape and its Treatment," an excellent book, which serves as a text for the discourse, being *Village and Farm Cottages*, by Messrs. Cleaveland and Backus. There are one or two positions taken by the writer, which we have to dissent from; the first one being the use of the word "Landscape," circumscribing its meaning so as to leave it to be inferred that external nature can be scientifically *treated*, so as to be rendered more interesting than when left to that harmonious development in association with man wherein he acts unconsciously upon it. Perhaps the following quotations will show what we mean. He says:

"Houses are artificial objects; *but no landscape is complete, or interesting without them.* After all this cant about the natural and the artificial, the warmest admirer of nature must admit that a landscape is cold and inexpressive, unless it contains some work of human hands."

If we were an architect, we might accept this assertion as a special plea for the craft; but, as a general principle, we must demur, and the writer himself agrees with us in the following sentence, which may be quoted as a rejoinder to the above.

"The rude parts of landscape, it will not be denied, are more commonly picturesque than such as have been smoothed and embellished by the hand of man, because Nature does not, so often as man, introduce offensive and discordant objects into her scenes."

We may, perhaps, be too sensitive; but it seems to us the writer seeks to confound the spontaneous landscape of Nature with the artificial one of man. We, therefore, protest against any distortion of the term *Landscape*, the signification of which we conceive to mean any aspect of Nature, that is felt to be beautiful through communion with the spirit of its creator. It may include "the loveliest village of the plain," or the "diamond city of the desert," like Damascus, or a "snow-clad alp," and dark ravine, or vine-clad hills, or a vast prairie, or the unlimited ocean, we enjoy landscape, whether mingled with works by the hand of man, or whether we gaze upon any of its features, rude, untamed, and unmarked by any sign of human power. So far as the term Landscape-gardening is concerned, we have no special affection for it. Let us have a better, if possible. Our writer considers it a misnomer, and says—

"We would suggest the word *Calichthonics* (compounded of the Greek words *καλός* beautiful, and *χώρα* earth) as an appropriate name for the science that treats of the sublime, the beautiful, and the picturesque, both in nature and art, as applied to the improvement of landscape, thus comprehending within its sphere, not gardening alone, but likewise dendrology, architecture, road-making, geognosy, and monumental sculpture."

We give the word *Calichthonics* an airing, and invite